DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 147 841 CS 203 796

TITLE	A Language for Life: The N.U.T.'s (National Union of Teachers) Commentary on the Bullock Report.
INSTITUTION	National Union of Teachers, London (England).
PUB DATE	May 76
NOTE	52p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$3.50 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Composition Skills (Literary); Elementary Secondary Education; *English Curriculum; *English Instruction; Foreign Countries; *Guidelines; *Language Arts; Listening Skills; *Reading Instruction; Teacher Education; Testing Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Bullock Report; *England

ABSTRACT

The report of the Bullock Committee of Enquiry was published in January 1975, under the title "A Language for Life," and presented extensive recommendations concerning all aspects of English teaching, including reading, writing, talking, and listening, the role of initial and inservice training, and monitoring of general levels of student attainment. The present report is the response of the National Union of Teachers to the emphases and recommendations of the Bullock committee. Major aspects of the Bullock Report are summarized, with commentary on those aspects considered to be of most concern to members of the union. Appendixes report results from a survey on the implementation of certain aspects of "A Language for Life," selected facts relevant to committee recommendations, comments on unqualified persons and the teaching of reading, resources related to the Bullock Report, and two specific examples of a basic language course. (AA)

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A language for life

The N.U.T's commentary on the Bullock Report

National Union of Teachers

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FOREWORD

The Report of the Bullock Committee of Enquiry was published in January, 1975 under the title "A Language for Life".

The Committee, set up in 1972 under the Chairmanship of Sir Alan Bullock, was thought by many to be an enquiry solely into reading standards but its remit was far wider in its scope and embraced all aspects of English teaching, including reading, writing, talking and listening. It also concerned itself with ways of improving present practice, the role that initial and in-service training might play and the extent to which arrangements for monitoring the general level of attainment in these skills could be introduced.

The National Union of Teachers has consistently supported the right of schools to determine their curricula but its concern about standards of literacy encouraged the Executive to establish a Working Party of six of its members to consider the Bullock Committee's recommendations and their implications for the education service. It was not intended that the Working Party should present a summary of the Report but a commentary on those aspects which the Executive considers to be of most concern to members of the Union.

It is a matter of deep regret to the Union that economy in educational expenditure has prohibited the implementation of many of the Report's seventeen major recommendations. These recommendations should form the basis of a national language policy for many years, it is essential that we should ensure that the resources are provided to give full effect to the tasks Lord Bullock and his Committee set before us.

FRED JARVIS
General Secretary

May 1976

A: INTRODUCTION

The National Union of Teachers submitted its evidence to the Bullock Committee of Enquiry in February 1973. It welcomed the enquiry and stressed the importance of universal literacy in modern society. Many aspects of pre-school development, the effects of social and educational disadvantage, continuity of learning patterns, teaching supply and size of classes, had been examined by the Plowden Council in 1966. The Union felt that whilst much had been done to implement the Plowden Report, there was still a need for a further detailed survey of literacy standards and based its evidence on an assessment of the current situation, its problems and future remedies and took account of the following aspects:-

(i) A critical survey of current theory and practice in the light of our present understanding of mental development and the learning process;

(ii) an evaluation of specific methods now in use and available material for the teaching of reading;

(iii) other influences: social, regional and local factors; health handicaps and the impact of mass media;

(iv) the crucial role of language as a pre-requisite of learning to read;

(v) the effect of conditions in the schools and particularly the size of classes; and

(vi) the role of teacher training: initial and in-service.

Following the publication of the Report, the Union commented:-

> "The Bullock Commiteee has done an excellent job by taking such a broad and progressive approach to its task. The Committee's 333 conclusions and recommendations are worthy of very close study by every school and educational administrator – and those who seek to cut back on the resources to be made available to schools."

The seventeen principal recommendations are listed below and form the focal point for much of the commentary which follows.

17 Principal Recommendations

1. A system of monitoring should be introduced which will employ new instruments to assess a wider range of attainments than has been attempted in the past and allow new criteria to be established for the definition of literacy.

   (21-35)

2. There should be positive steps to develop the language ability of children in the pre-school and nursery and infant years. These should include arrangements for the involvement of parents, the improvement of staffing ratios in infant schools, and the employment of teachers' aides whose training has included a language element.

   (39-55)

3. Every school should devise a systematic policy for the development of reading competence in pupils of all ages and ability levels.
(56-69; 71-90; 93-96; 171)

4. Each school should have an organised policy for language across the curriculum, establishing every teacher's involvement in language and reading development throughout the years of schooling.
(137-139; 190; 89; 171)

5. Every school should have a suitably qualified teacher with responsibility for advising and supporting his colleagues in language and the teaching of reading.
(148-149; 171)

6. There should be close consultation between schools, and the transmission of effective records, to ensure continuity in the teaching of reading and in the language development of every pupil.
(155-167; 198)

7. English in the secondary school should have improved resources in terms of staffing, accommodation, and ancillary help.
(178; 181-188)

8. Every L.E.A. should appoint a specialist English adviser and should establish an advisory team with the specific responsibility of supporting schools in all aspects of language in education.
(191-194; 224)

9. L.E.A.s and schools should introduce early screening procedures to prevent cumulative language and reading failure and to guarantee individual diagnosis and treatment.
(195-203)

10. Additional assistance should be given to children retarded in reading, and where it is the school's policy to withdraw pupils from their classes for special help they should continue to receive support at the appropriate level on their return.
(219-223)

11. There should be a reading clinic or remedial centre in every L.E.A., giving access to a comprehensive diagnostic service and expert medical, psychological, and teaching help. In addition to its provision for children with severe reading difficulties the centre should offer an advisory service to schools in association with the L.E.A.'s specialist adviser.
(213; 224-225)

12. Provision for tuition of adult illiterates and semi-literates should be greatly increased, and there should be a national reference point for the coordination of information and support.
(228-244)

13. Children of families of overseas origin should have more substantial and sustained tuition in English. Advisers and specialist teachers are required in greater strength in areas of need.
(245-246; 251-252; 254-262)

14. A standing working party should be formed, made up of representatives of the D.E.S. and L.E.A.s, to consider capitation allowances and the resources of schools, and a satisfactory level of book provision should be its first subject of inquiry.

(283-287)

15. A substantial course on language in education (including reading) should be part of every primary and secondary school teacher's initial training, whatever the teacher's subject or the age of the children with whom he or she will be working.

(308-313; 316)

16. There should be an expansion in in-service education opportunities in reading and the various other aspects of the teaching of English, and these should include courses at diploma and higher degree level. Teachers in every L.E.A. should have access to a language/reading centre.

(317-332; 210)

17. There should be a national centre for language in education, concerned with the teaching of English in all its aspects, from language and reading in the early years to advanced studies with sixth forms.

(333)

B: EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Reading Schemes

The Bullock Report concludes that "there is no one method, medium, approach, device or philosophy that holds the key to the process of learning to read." In its evidence to the Committee, the Union stated "there is an urgent need for a critical assessment of the methods employed in the teaching of reading and of the multiplicity of schemes now available." We are pleased therefore, that the Committee examined this aspect closely and in echoing these misgivings about the current situation, urges that attention should be given to the further development of the kind of reading scheme to which it is difficult to apply a definition e.g. 'phonic-based', 'look-and-say' etc. The Committee considers that most reading schemes make a valuable contribution to the reading and language development of children and should be used in conjunction with a wide variety of ancillary resources; pupils should also be given a selection of reading material from a number of sources. It was noted that many schools had dispensed with commercially-produced schemes, and that where this was the case, considerable enterprise and knowledge of reading techniques had been applied to ensure that the books selected for this purpose enabled the pupils to acquire their reading skills in a logical and structured manner.

The Union has always supported the professional autonomy of teachers and maintained that they should be free to choose their own teaching methods and materials. We are concerned, however, that the specific professional expertise needed to implement particular methods may not exist in some schools and that information in the use and evaluation of new schemes is not always available to the teacher. For this reason, the Union recommended in its evidence, that new and relatively untried reading materials should be professionally evaluated and that there should be machinery established to ensure the dissemination of such information so that teachers would be better able to judge which programmes were best suited to the needs of their children. The Committee acknowledges this need and recommends that teachers should be skilled in assessing the value of commercially-produced material. Such skills would be acquired during the initial training period or in-service courses; in addition, local reading and language centres and the proposed national centre for language in education should ensure that all schools are kept informed of current developments.

The Committee examined the characteristics of reading schemes. It criticises those which fail to bring into play the intermediate and comprehension skills and those which use stilted and unnatural language, far removed from anything the child hears in real life or uses himself. "Look and Say" schemes assume there will be an emphasis on teaching the recognition of whole words prior to an examination of letters and sounds. Word shape and length and appropriate pictures are considered to be useful cues for helping with word recognition in the early stages; whilst there may be an examination of the word structure, the learning of letter sounds and attempts at synthesis are not introduced until later. The Committee

considers that these schemes do not afford assistance with phonics or provide context cues. Similarly, phonic based schemes assume that the pupils need to learn letter sounds and how to synthesise them systematically – this, it is claimed, will enable the children to achieve independence in tackling unfamiliar words. Vocabulary control is governed by the rate at which new phonic combinations are to be introduced and this will inevitably restrict the range of words which can be used. The Committee criticises both types of scheme, commenting that any scheme which presents highly-contrived syntactic sentences or limits the vocabulary too closely prevents the child from developing his capacity to detect sequential probability. The survey did not indicate that teachers favoured one method rather than another; in fact, most teachers used a combination of methods and it is the Committee's view that the approach teachers use is not as important as the quality of their relationship with the children, their degree of expert knowledge and their skill in interpreting the learning needs of each child. The reading programme should draw upon a wide range of resources; before a child embarks on a scheme, he should have experience of a variety of pre-reading activities which will enable him to acquire a general ability to respond to:–

shape and orientation in discriminating between letters

letter sequence in terms of left to right,

letters and groups of letters as symbols that represent sounds

letter sequences as groups of symbols that can represent a sequence of sounds,

whole words as units of meaning, not primarily as symbols representing sounds,

groups of words in terms of meaning, not as isolated words to be pronounced.

Although only ten per cent of the sample of schools with infants used the initial teaching alphabet, the Committee notes that there is no evidence that the method produces adverse effects at a later stage of schooling. It is not unanimous however in its assessment of the value of i.t.a. and recommends that teachers should carefully examine its merits objectively and should not be influenced by the statements of its advocates and opponents. In particular, the Committee accepts that research indicates that any method which simplifies the relationship between sound and spelling by reducing the number of items to be learned and clarifying the ambiguities, must make it much easier for a child to make progress in the early stages. This is confirmed by a Schools Council Report on i.t.a. which concludes "There is no evidence whatsoever for the belief that the best way to learn to read in traditional orthography is to learn to read in traditional orthography. It would appear that the best way to learn to read in traditional orthography is to learn to read in the initial reading alphabet" (1). Critics of i.t.a. do not agree that gains by i.t.a. pupils in reading and writing are solely attributable to the medium itself and Vera Southgate noted in the Schools Council Report (q.v.) that:–

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(1) i.t.a.: An Independent Evaluation: F.W. Warburton & V. Southgate (1969).

> "It would be unfortunate if the mainly favourable tone of this report were taken to imply that the use of i.t.a. for beginning reading with infants was the final and only solution. The experiments of the past six years have demonstrated that in many cases the usual ways in which children have been taught to read can be improved. We should continue to investigate how children learn to read and the most effective media, methods, materials and procedures for helping them."

The Committee therefore recommends that, in spite of the continuing debate regarding the merits of the i.t.a. system, schools which choose to adopt it should be given full support.

The Union believes that reading schemes should be examined to ascertain whether the content will affect pupils' attitudes. The Committee is also concerned that children's early reading experience should go beyond a restricted range of reading matter. Many books displayed "a striking divergence from the realities of community family and child life and from what is known about child development". (1) The Union endorses the Committee's view that any reading scheme should stand up to questions about how parental roles, sex roles, attitudes to authority etc. are represented and it urges the Government to initiate a national survey of reading matter to ascertain the current situation.

The discovery or re-discovery of a particular formula will not of itself improve the teaching of reading and for this reason the Committee does not recommend the use of one approach rather than another; too much attention has been given to polarised opinions about the methods of reading when what is required is "a comprehensive study of all the factors at work and the influence that can be exerted upon them." The Committee considers that a good reading scheme is one "which provides a sound basis for the development of all the reading skills in an integrated way" whilst the Union believes that schemes should have more relevance to the children's lives and to the objects familiar to them.

Remedial Reading

The Union agrees with the Bullock Committee's statement that prevention is better than cure when dealing with children with reading difficulties. The Report identifies seven as the crucial age for assessing reading development and acknowledges that the primary stage of education is vital if a child is to overcome his/her reading difficulties and become a fully literate adult. The survey of children in the Isle of Wight (2) has shown that the majority of those children who have had reading difficulties in their primary schools have continued to lag behind to the end of their school days. For many years the Union has advocated that all children who are backward in reading should be screened. It therefore welcomed the Department of Education and Science document "Children with Specific Reading Difficulties"

(1) What the Story World is Like', from "What Children Read in School", A.E. Blom, R.R. Waite, S.G. Zimet and S. Edge, New York (1972, Crune and Stratton)

(2) Education, Health and Behaviour: M. Rutler, J. Tizard, K. Whitmore (Longman, 1970).

published in 1972 which recommended that teachers, educational psychologists and school medical officers should collaborate in screening all children at the end of their infant schooling. Additionally the Union strongly supports the Bullock Committee's recommendation that children should be continually appraised throughout their school lives starting with the nursery stage.

There are many causes of reading backwardness. The Union in its evidence to the Committee pointed out the close relationship between social disadvantage and educational attainment: the chances of an unskilled manual worker's child being a poor reader at seven are six times greater than those of a professional worker's child, while the chances of an unskilled manual worker's child not being able to read at all at this age are fifteen times greater than those of a professional worker's child. (1) Similar findings are obtainable in the fields of speech therapy, material conditions at home, size of family, children with poor health and those from broken homes. Cultural poverty too (lack of books at home, low parental interest etc.) had been recognised by the Plowden Committee to be closely related to backwardness. Then there are children with 'specific reading retardation', and others whose reading difficulties, the Report notes, arise from the anomalous situation that, because they are summer-born children, they "have had only two years of early schooling". In the latter case the Union has always maintained that children should be admitted to schools at the beginning of the school year in which they reach the age of five and that the schools should have the necessary equipment, capitation and staff to meet this intake.

The Union strongly endorses the Committee's view that the problem of reading retardation is "more than one of teaching reading, and a combined effort by the social services, teachers and administrators is required over the whole period of a child's school life" if the vicious circle of emotional disorders, reading failure and anti-social behaviour is to be broken.

The Committee lays down four general principles which it considers essential for the success of remedial work: the teacher should have additional time and resources in order to adapt remedial methods to suit the individual child's needs and difficulties; he/she should be highly skilled in understanding the children's emotional and development needs; help should be related to the rest of a child's learning and not be an isolated activity; and the parents should be encouraged and made aware of the nature of their children's difficulties. While accepting these general principles the Union emphasises that remedial help in reading should be given to the child at the onset of difficulty rather than after the child has fallen behind. Such help should be given to a child by an experienced, qualified and full-time teacher on a one to one basis. The Union therefore considers the present situation in primary schools highly unsatisfactory where, according to the Report's findings, 69 per cent of the teachers teaching remedial groups are part-timers, many of whom have no recent experience of teaching reading and no in-service training to prepare them. The groups also tend to be large, seldom falling below 10 to 15

(1) **From Birth to Seven**: R. Davie, N. Butler, H. Goldstein (Longman, 1972).

children. Newly qualified teachers should not be immediately employed in remedial work since they need a depth of understanding which can only be developed after some practical teaching experience.

In the light of the foregoing the Union cannot but deplore the schemes brought to its attention by its members involving the use of sixth form pupils as substitute teachers of reading for remedial children in lower forms. The Report recommends in no uncertain terms that "remedial work is not for the inexperienced or indifferent teacher, but for the teacher who combines a high level of teaching skill with an understanding of the children's emotional and developmental needs". The Report suggests conversation with sympathetic adults but adds that overall responsibility must remain in the hands of the teachers. The Union believes that one way of improving the quality of remedial work in schools is by arranging for peripatetic teachers to spend some periods of time attached to ordinary and special schools where their experience and knowledge could be shared by other teachers. The arrangement could be of mutual benefit to both the visiting teacher and the permanent staff. In this way assistance can be given to those joining the remedial/special education fields on a day-to-day basis. (1)

In the secondary schools the Committee notes that 'slow learners' attract "less than their share of resources, and their educational needs appear to be inadequately recognised". It is important that in every school a senior member of the staff should be responsible for these children and should co-ordinate all the school's resources on their behalf. The Committee considers it important for children to maintain contact with the rest of their learning and interests when they are withdrawn from their regular class-groups for additional help in reading, or when such help is given in special classes or 'remedial departments'. To facilitate this the Committee encourages wider use of the 'support option' system whereby fourth and fifth year pupils with reading difficulties follow the normal option timetable but take one subject fewer than their colleagues in order to be released for extra support in reading. Another recommended initiative is to have remedial specialists counsel pupils, in close association with subject teachers, in their normal specialist lessons. The Department of Education and Science has commended the system of block timetables for helping 'slow learners' in secondary schools, while the Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell makes use of a scattergram to place children in the appropriate group for English attainment and separately for mathematics attainment, by cross-setting techniques. (2) Carefully graded reading materials are used to implement this. For several years the Borough has published a booklet "The Teachers' Guide to Reading Schemes for Slow Learners" to help head teachers and class teachers with this aspect of their work and has appointed heads of remedial departments at a senior level in comprehensive schools. The Union endorses this development and emphasises that all remedial departments should use a structured reading programme.

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(1) **Educating the handicapped: NUT's evidence to the Warnock Committee of Inquiry into the educational and other needs of handicapped children and young persons (1975).**

(2) **How developments in special education have contributed to ordinary schools: T. Kelly, Secondary Education, September 1974, Volume 4, Number 4.**

The Union is as anxious as the Committee that remedial help should be given in the children's own schools. However, the Union recognises, along with the Committee, that children with specific reading difficulties would benefit much more from intensive help in remedial centres or clinics. Such children are often called 'dyslexic', although the Committee believes that this term "serves little useful purpose other than to draw attention to the fact that the problem of these children can be chronic and severe". A more helpful description is 'specific reading retardation'. Rutter and Yule define this as 'a syndrome characterised by severe reading difficulties which are not accountable for in terms of low intelligence and which are not explicable merely in terms of the lower end of a normal distribution of reading skills". (1) The Committee recommends that the centres or clinics should be available in every local authority and the Union welcomes the action of authorities who have established such centres. The centres should be staffed by experienced teachers who can call upon the skills of doctors and psychologists. They should provide expert diagnosis, assessment and treatment for children who attend there; offer an advisory service and in-service courses for teachers in ordinary schools; evaluate books for backward readers and disseminate information. The Report recommends that each local authority should have a specialist adviser with special responsibility for children experiencing learning difficulties. This adviser should liaise between the centres and the proposed English advisory groups in the authorities.

In conclusion the Union wishes to highlight two important findings of the Bullock Report concerning children with reading difficulties. The first is the serious lack of proper in-service training for remedial teachers. The Committee's survey shows that (excluding the peripatetics) 29.2 per cent of teachers of withdrawal groups or classes attend no courses while 46.9 per cent attend courses lasting less than six weeks.

Secondly, the Report repeatedly stresses the need for favourable teacher-pupil ratios if reading difficulties are to be prevented. Therefore the Government's action in reducing the supply of teachers is in complete opposition to the whole tenor of the Report that "preventive measures are likely to be far more productive than remedial ones".

Monitoring, Screening, Diagnosis and Recording

The measurement of language skills has evoked so much interest and controversy in recent years that the discussion of these matters has rather obscured studies of the component sub-skills involved in language acquisition and of how professional evaluation can most effectively assist in the process of language acquisition. The Union believes that the measurement of reading, whether monitoring or diagnostic and other skills should have a demonstrable value in the improvement of teaching. The Bullock Committee makes the case that: 'the plain truth is that everything depends upon the diagnostic skill of the teacher. She is the one in close daily con-

(1) **Specific Reading Retardation**: M. Rutter and W. Yule in **The Review of Special Education**: ed. L. Mann and D. Sabatino (Buttonwood Farms inc: 1973).

tact with the child and is best placed to relate his reading development to his intellectual development, his linguistic competence and his home circumstances.' Systematic methods of support and guidance must be directed at the points of contact between the teacher and pupils.

The Union is very dissatisfied with the established series of national monitoring exercises of reading ability and completely agrees with the Committee that the tests used are inadequate as measures of reading ability. The Report states that 'what they measure is a narrow aspect of silent reading comprehension'. The outdated nature of the tests and the sampling difficulties encountered in the last national surveys by the NFER only serve to compound the original error of establishing such a narrow basis for successive reading surveys. The grounds for doubting the validity of the last survey in England have been examined several times. The Union commends the section of the Bullock Report which dispassionately sets out the information available, for what is apparent from this review, is that reading standards as measured by the tests have risen considerably since the war. It is only in recent years that standards may have levelled off.

The Union is not complacent about the less satisfactory findings in the review of standards of reading undertaken by the Committee. However, it can no longer accept the 1948 baseline for measuring the movement of reading standards nor the tests which have been employed. Furthermore the Union cannot accept a repetition of the national surveys using the old survey instruments. The Union considers that alternative methodologies, such as the use of 'item pool', would be more satisfactory. This would entail the collection of a large stock of test items, covering many aspects of reading sub-skills, and the use of light sampling at frequent intervals. The Union acknowledges that the notion of a pool has considerable technical advantages. Already the principle has been applied to the even more complex area of mathematics testing and national monitoring may soon be established on mathematical skills. Nevertheless, the Union believes that isolated measurements of this kind present the very real danger of feeding prejudice of one sort or another. Spurious assumptions will inevitably be made about the health of the education service on scant information as presented. Monitoring exercises which provide single-value measures of progress are not only unhelpful to the teaching profession, but only encourage an over-simplification of the situation when results are represented to a wider audience. The Union believes that there are additional advantages in using 'item pool' techniques to help authorities or schools make periodic assessments of performance in conjunction with more local research and investigation or as one part of a screening exercise. The Union agrees with the Committee that such a pool should be the responsibility of an independent body, but that its specification should be drawn from a consultative panel including teachers and that individual items should be written by teachers.

The Committee considers the possibility of monitoring language skills other than reading. The monitoring of spoken English presents certain fundamental difficulties and is not recommended, but the monitoring of children's mastery of written language is favoured by the Committee. The Union doubts the wisdom of attempting

to establish a national monitoring exercise similar in structure to that for reading. However, it welcomes the attempts that are being made to examine children's writing involving studies of structure, assessment by 'impression marking' as well as for accuracy in syntax. Assessment should involve the generation of language and not just a response to it. It is the practising teacher who requires such skills of assessment not merely the appropriately trained specialists who are responsible for periodic reviews but are at a distance from the school situation.

The Union agrees that early detection is vital but is disturbed that such heavy reliance is placed on standardized tests. Testing by a teacher can be of value providing the teacher is able to use other forms of assessment when required. Central to this is good observation and recording which as the Committee acknowledges 'every good teacher sees this as a vital part of her normal work'. It is important too that the teacher should be familiar with the range of supportive services which can assist in his or her work. The Union in its evidence to the Warnock Committee (1) deals at length with services for children exhibiting symptoms of special educational need. It is desirable that teachers are familiar with the process of assessment for special education. The Union cannot support the use of 'at risk' registers. It agrees with the Bullock Committee that though well intentioned, such registers in the medical field are cumbersome and eventually little used. It is far preferable that the younger child should receive education in an environment where observation is taking place and his progress adequately recorded. Systematic screening presents three quite distinct problems. The first issue concerns the type of 'screening' which is established. The Bullock Committee does not favour the use of standardised tests alone as these can only present narrow measures of ability. The Union agrees with the Committee that such measures carry the danger that they may shape the teacher's expectations of a pupil. In fact many of the difficulties a child encounters when acquiring the use of language can quite easily be resolved and should have nothing to do with his or her performance in the long term. Systematic screening to be effective should rely on the skill of the teacher and formal testing should play a subsidiary role. The second problem concerns the use of the data gathered as a result of screening. Much depends on how it is sorted and in what form. The requirement is not only for accurate recording but also for a stimulus to the individually planned language programme. Finally, a system of screening is time-consuming. The Union would welcome studies into ways of record-keeping as recording of this kind can be efficiently integrated into the working day of staff in primary schools. The additional need is for adequate clerical assistance at the school level for this work.

The Union acknowledges that, at a local level, systematic screening can have advantages. It is essential that the requirements set out in the section above are met and that there are periodic reviews of the system established. The system should develop from consultation between teachers, advisers and psychologists. On a national level this will have implications for the present position regarding the access to test materials. The Union recognises that some tests will be reserved by

(1) **Educating the handicapped (NUT 1975).**

psychologists in order to prevent their over-use. However, the Union believes that the restrictive use of some tests is not justified on these grounds or on the grounds that an expertise held by another professional group is required in the use of the tests.

Screening in the manner described above is the first stage in a developed system of assessment. The next stage involves detailed diagnosis. The Union wholeheartedly supports the Bullock Committee's contention that 'testing should always lead to more efficient teaching' and the corollary of this: 'testing should never be carried out without a real purpose'. Observation in diagnosis is as valuable as in the screening process, but of a different order.

A thorough knowledge of reading and other sub-skills is more important at this point than any other. The Union is critical of the tests available to supplement other diagnostic work. While most tests can be used effectively after many years familiarity, too little precise information is offered to the teacher of more limited experience. The Union believes that every effort should be made by test agencies to improve existing diagnostic tests and to devise new tests. The Union agrees that it is unlikely to be sufficient to use graded readers alone in the diagnosis of reading and other difficulties, although it is important that information about each child's accomplishment on such schemes is recorded.

The Union has welcomed the multi-disciplinary approach towards assessment recommended in Circular 2/75 and in its evidence to Warnock considers the relationship with psychologists, therapists and psychiatrists in some detail. The roles the educational psychologist and teachers play in particular situations depend naturally on the extent of their respective experiences in such work. However, the goal should be that every teacher is equipped to determine when further investigation of a child's behaviour or ability is required. The development of a team approach is essential in these matters.

Children from Families of Overseas Origin

In considering the language needs of children unable to speak Standard English, the Committee established that 3.3% of the total school population was from families of overseas origin. This figure obtained from the 1973 D.E.S. statistics, is misleading; the settlement of families in London and the industrial cities of the North and Midlands has meant that a very high proportion of immigrants attend schools in these areas. The Committee is disturbed that few authorities took steps to identify the educational needs of the children in their care and it recommends that local education authorities should carry out regular surveys to ascertain the levels of proficiency in English and to distinguish between their ethnic origins. This supports the Union's view that "in order to obviate the danger of these children being undervalued and therefore not given appropriate educational goals, work should continue on the development of appropriate measuring devices, and the Union hopes that those concerned with research in this field will give it particular

attention". (1) The provision of appropriate educational programmes should be given a high priority and do more than meet the initial language needs of the new arrivals.

The Report places much emphasis on the long term nature of the issues involved and stresses the importance of sustaining the teaching of English until the children have achieved fluency in speaking, reading and writing. Teachers should be given opportunities to attend in-service courses which would enable them to develop an informed and sympathetic understanding of the different cultural backgrounds of their pupils and to be aware of the many differences which exist amongst children defined as immigrant. It is important that authorities and teachers recognise that there is no stereotype immigrant pupil nor a set of stereotype solutions. Whilst many will have the security of a stable home background, there are others who will be from families in similar circumstances to the disadvantaged indigenous families living in the inner cities. The Union, in recognising the need for improved resources for *all* disadvantaged children, has repeatedly pressed the Government to initiate a long term programme of positive discrimination in these areas but stresses that "such services should be available to, and for the benefit of, all, . . . what could be a source of potential friction can become a factor producing harmony and mutual comprehension". (2) It is unfortunate that there has been little research into the comparative performance of minority group children at school in Britain. The surveys that have been undertaken however, indicate a generally low pattern of attainment. West Indian children in particular seem to have greater difficulty in achieving reading and writing skills at the primary level. Whilst materials have been developed to promote communication skills, there is an urgent need for research into the specific problems experienced by West Indian children in learning to read; if these problems were better understood, not only would their literacy skills improve but their level of all-round attainment would also be raised.

The Report recommends that the curriculum should reflect the community in which the children live, that schools should not remain isolated from the cultural backgrounds of its pupils and that every effort should be made to enable the pupils to adjust to school life whilst retaining their links with home. Such a recommendation is in keeping with the Union's policy which advocates "a process of mutual adaptation and the creation of understanding with the retention of all that is valuable in the different cultures".

Reading materials should have a multi-racial bias and teachers should be encouraged to compile their own lists of suitable books and should be aware that the communities the schools serve have altered radically in recent years. Whilst the Schools Council has contributed a great deal to the supply of suitable project materials, there are still far too few books available to meet the special needs of children with overseas backgrounds and publishers are urged to increase the supply of such books.

In an attempt to identify the language needs of immigrant pupils, the Committee distinguished between those children who spoke a dialect at home – usually Creole – and those whose mother tongue is a totally different language. Teachers and child-

(1), (2) **The Education of Immigrants** (NUT, February 1973).

ren of West Indian origin should have an understanding of the Creole dialect and be aware that it is a well-developed language in its own right; there is a tendency to dismiss the pupils' speech as "incorrect" English unless this understanding is present. This not only exacerbates the communication problems but might also stigmatise the children because of the form of language they use. The teaching of English as a second language should begin much earlier and extend well into the secondary stage until fluency is achieved. Whilst there are many materials available for such teaching, there is still a shortage of specialist teachers experienced in this field; to meet this need the Report recommends an expansion of in-service training and an extensive system of support, both from teachers' centres and language advisers. The Union endorses the Committee's view that English language teaching must be a continuous process and that sufficient provision must be made to meet the needs of all children requiring additional help, preferably within a normal school environment. In 1967, the Union made a strong case for the expansion of nursery education for all children, in particular in those areas where there was a concentration of immigrant families. It was considered that if such schools were carefully sited, they could not only play an important part in familiarising the children with the materials and concepts taken for granted in our educational system, but also do much to encourage social integration by providing opportunities for indigenous and immigrant parents to meet.

The Report supports the Union's view and makes a special plea for additional language work to be undertaken for short periods daily. More efforts should be made to involve the parents in the life of the school and the Report proposes that welfare officers should liaise with the schools. Whilst the Union endorses this recommendation and supports the idea of a more systematic and sustained effort to link the home and school in areas of intensive immigrant populations, it would have reservations should teachers be involved in visiting homes. (q.v. Home Visiting and the parents' role.) The Report refers to the desirability of involving members of the minority groups in liaison work and considers it important that children should see people of their own community in the roles of teacher, helper and adviser; The Union stated in its policy document that in this connection liaison and welfare officers of the same race or origin can play an absolutely vital part in acting as links between the parents and the school and in their mutual interpretation.

The results of the investigations carried out by the Committee are disquieting. They highlight the need for increased in-service training, for improved initial training, for more resources, accommodation and research. The Union welcomes the Report's recommendations which, if implemented, will go a long way to alleviate many of the existing problems.

Oral Languages

The importance of 'talk' at all levels of schooling is often under-rated. In primary schools the child may establish a close relationship with the class teacher during the year and each develops an understanding of the other's use of language; at secon-

dary level there are fewer opportunities to develop this understanding. The Committee examines the use of oral language from two aspects; (i) the way in which teachers use language themselves and (ii) the methods whereby the pupils are encouraged to use and expand their own language.

At primary and middle level, new patterns in organisation have brought about a change of emphasis in the teacher's role. The class lesson in which the teacher talked and the children wrote is less frequent; group situations demand a high degree of skill from the teacher who must provide opportunities for the pupils to develop their use of language.

It is important that children talk freely about the subjects in which they are interested but if their ability to use language as an instrument of learning is to be developed, the teacher must consciously structure his pupils' assignments in order to increase the complexity of their thinking and the Committee considers that this is best achieved by large and small group work.

At secondary level the class lesson is more commonly used and the Committee examines the problems and benefits of a classroom dialogue. Too often the teachers are concerned with precise presentation of subject material with questions interwoven at appropriate intervals. To be effective, the Committee considers that such questions should be open-ended and that the teacher should aim to stimulate the pupil's own thinking; it is also desirable for the teacher to use and discuss the children's contributions. The Committee emphasises the importance of accepting the child's language patterns and that attempts to criticise or ridicule accent is tantamount to an attack on the speaker's self-confidence and esteem.

By his own attitude, the teacher should influence his pupils to be more flexible and aware of the way in which they regard others and should encourage them to use discussion as a means of investigation rather than as a forum for their own views.

Listening as opposed to hearing is an underrated skill. The Committee recommends that opportunities for the development of children's listening ability should be included in the normal class situation and that audio-visual aids should be used more frequently in this context.

The Union's evidence to the Committee stressed the importance of language in relation to general intellectual development and we therefore welcome the Committee's recommendations regarding the teaching of oral skills to children of all ages. At the same time we are concerned that adverse home and social conditions seriously retard this development for a considerable number of children and consider it vital that adequate pre-school provision is made in socially-disadvantaged areas, that staffing ratios in schools in these areas are favourable and that *all* teachers at both primary and secondary level should be cognisant of the skills and techniques involved in organising a structured approach to language development a view shared by the Bullock Committee who make a recommendation to this effect.

The Committee also considered the content of external oral examinations in English. Most have been introduced by CSE boards, although the London GCE Board has devised an 'O' level examination in Spoken English designed "to test

articulation and fluency". Schools which determine their objectives in teaching language skills should also assess the extent to which they are successful in achieving them. Where this is done by examinations, the tests set should reflect the work done and not seek to create contrived and artificial situations which bear little relation to the reality of the course; neither should sixteen year olds be formally trained "to speak" in response to given questions. The Committee, in assessing the advantages and limitations of external examinations, concludes that they are of most value where they help to extend the student's ability to use language naturally in a variety of ways.

Drama

In considering the role of drama in the school curriculum, the Committee was concerned that in many secondary schools drama is not recognised as a means of developing language and that a considerable number of English departments do not have teachers either sufficiently experienced or interested in this aspect of English. Of 1,052 teachers working with fourteen year olds, only 21 regarded themselves as drama specialists.

The Committee believes that drama has a valuable contribution to make in the language development of children and that improvisation in written and dramatic work should be complementary. In secondary schools, the English departments should discuss means whereby drama can be incorporated into the English time-table and the way that it can contribute to the overall development of the students. The Committee notes an increase in the number of external examinations in drama and welcomes this growth of opportunity especially if it results in more experience of drama for older secondary pupils. It is unfortunate, therefore, that a number of Mode 3 syllabuses include the 'History of the Theatre' and students are required to answer an undue number of written questions rather than demonstrate their practical achievements. The Committee recommends that examinations should be based on practical work rather than on the learning of facts.

Written Language

For many teachers, written work is the means by which students record what they have learned. Written examinations have become the principal medium for judging achievement in most subjects and until recently, the eleven plus examination in junior schools limited the types of writing the children were asked to produce. The removal of the majority of the selection tests has enabled teachers to offer a wider range of written experience to their pupils and to allow them more freedom in their choice of subject and approach. The Committee examined the 'personal writing' of pupils in junior and secondary schools, a term used to denote any form of writing which is not directly related to acquiring or recording knowledge; "Creative" writing developed when teachers encouraged their pupils to describe their experiences spontaneously. It was thought that techniques would be acquired as the need arose. Unfortunately the original intentions of creative writing have become

distorted; for some it means the use of language to express feelings and experiences in an ordinary way – for others it has become a label to attach to any form of writing and there are those for whom the effort to initiate a spontaneous response to a stimulus has resulted in the use of a wide variety of artificially contrived situations. The Committee believes that personal writing should develop not from prepared stimuli but from the class activities and personal experiences of the children. The teacher should be aware of the needs and objectives of his pupils and demonstrate the techniques appropriate to them.

To ensure that children achieve their potential, teachers should ensure that the pupils' linguistic development and standards of written work are linked and that progress is marked by an increase in the types of writing that can be successfully accomplished. Pupils should be given the opportunity to write for a variety of readers and should be able to analyse a specific task, choose the language appropriate to it and establish criteria by which to judge what they have achieved: the Committee believes that such competence in the use of written language will evolve from its purposeful use and not through the practice of written exercises unrelated to any context. Although extensive reading and writing should form the basis of language growth, there should be specific instruction in punctuation, structure of words, usage and some technical terms used in discussion. Such instruction should be given as the need arises but the teacher should determine which language objectives are appropriate to the development of his pupils and plan accordingly. Records or check lists should be used to establish to what extent these have been achieved.

Spelling

Spelling should be taught systematically, based on the needs and purposes of the pupils' written work, not on lists of words taken out of context; the children's attention should be directed to the structure of the words and they should be aware of the commonest spelling rules. The Committee believes that the ability to spell is part of the common responsibility for language development that all teachers, whatever their subjects, should share.

Handwriting

The Committee's views on handwriting are included in a separate annex. Unless a child is able to write easily, quickly and legibly, his output of written work will suffer, for a difficulty in handwriting restricts the child's flow of words and limits his fluency. Without instruction, a child is unlikely to develop a legible style which is simultaneously individual and fast-flowing. The Committee believes, therefore, that is is essential that each staff should decide which style of handwriting is to be adopted and that it should be taught throughout the school. The Committee does not support one model rather than another, and recommends that schools should decide for themselves, taking into account the views of all members of staff; attention should also be given to general principles of presentation and the Committee believes that children should learn to regard the appearance of their work as important.

Examinations

The Committee reviewed the developments in examinations in written English which have led to present practice. It endorses earlier Reports that English should be assessed at 16+ and that all pupils in ordinary schools should be afforded the opportunity of assessment whatever their level of ability. The development of English C.S.E. courses, many of which contain an oral language component, has made a significant contribution to the change of emphasis in examination procedures — a development with which the Union has been closely associated. Externally-moderated, school-based assessment rather than rigid syllabuses are more suited to the wide and flexible range of assessment English requires and where feasible post 'O' level English courses should contain a language element for those students who wish to opt for it.

The Mass Media

In its evidence to the Bullock Committee, the Union recognised that many children rely on visual rather than oral methods of expression and communication. The Committee's findings bear this out. The Report states that children of school age are spending an increasing amount of time watching television. In 1973 children between the ages of five and fourteen spend on an average 25 hours a week watching television compared with an average of 21 hours a week four years previously. However, the Committee points to the fact that there is very little empirical evidence to show whether television has had any effects on standards of reading or on the amount that children read. Research conducted recently by the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement, examined the reading ability of children in some 20 countries and revealed that the time spent on watching television did not have an adverse effect on reading habits. In 1975, the Schools Council's interim report into children's reading habits, *Children's reading interests*, observed that "there exists a substantial number of 'light' viewers who read little or nothing, and also a substantial number of 'heavy' viewers who read a great deal". (1) Nonetheless, the Committee's cautious conclusion is that it believes that the general effect of watching television has been to reduce the amount of time spent on private reading. To this the Union would add that it still stands by the view it expressed to the Pilkington Committee on Broadcasting in 1960 that advertisements often contribute to the debasement of language in the extravagant claims made for the various products.

The Union is pleased that the Report's findings do not lead the Committee, as some witnesses suggested it should, to consider that television is not worthy of major consideration. It is recognised that children spend on an average almost as much time watching television as they spend in classrooms. The influence the medium could exert on improving the reading standards, not only of children but also of adults, should not be underestimated. The Committee examines the possibility of developing television programmes to help the language interaction of parent and

(1) F. Whitehead, A.C. Capey and W. Maddren, *Children's reading interests*, Schools Council Working Paper 52, Evans/Methuen Educational page 17

child and recommends that there should be research into the development of television programmes aimed at making parents aware of their children's language needs and helping them to fulfil them. These and similar programmes should be shown on video-tape at ante-natal clinics.

The Committee believes television, more so than reading schemes, reflects the seventies. "It exposes children to a range of accents, idioms, and registers which they would not otherwise hear." The Union strongly supports the recommendation that there should be more research into television's impact on children's language particularly programmes children watch between the end of afternoon school and tea-time as these are particularly influential.

The Committee is aware, as is the Union, of the vital role the mass media – television, radio and newspapers – can play in publicising adult literacy programmes. One brief item on adult illiteracy in a regional programme resulted in 300 enquiries in a single local authority. The Union welcomes this endorsement of its evidence to the Annan Committee.

The Union particularly welcomes the BBC's response to the Committee's recommendations. A three year adult literacy project, which includes the series "On the Move" was launched in September 1975 and relates specifically to adults with literacy problems. There is also a radio series for voluntary tutors. Since September 10,000 tutors and a large number of students have contacted the BBC as a result of these programmes and have been referred to their local authorities for additional information and help.

The Committee considers that educational broadcasting, both radio and television, is a very important resource for reading and language development. The Union concurs with this and in its evidence to the Annan Committee on the future of broadcasting submitted in March 1975, it recommended that the proposed Fourth Channel should be allocated to formal educational programmes and envisaged that, in the first instance, all schools programmes and Open University courses should be transferred to this Channel. Many teachers already base a good deal of classroom work on educational programmes, but the Union is as concerned as the Committee that a decade after the publication of the Newsom Report, there is still little evidence of the kind of study it recommends: "We should wish to add a strong claim for the study of film and television in their own right". The Union can forsee advantages in playing back in school hours video-recorded evening programmes. Television and radio can be good facilitators of local curriculum development as well as methods of communication worthy of study in themselves.

The Committee notes that broadcasters on local radio co-operate closely with teachers, but observes that only in rare cases have teachers and children been involved in programmes. It recommends that opportunities for the direct involvement of teachers and pupils in educational radio and television programmes should be taken up more extensively. The Union welcomes this endorsement that "there is a need to involve teachers more closely in the decision-making process of educational broadcasting. Through the recognised teacher organisations, teachers should, locally as well as nationally, be involved in the programme planning and

act as educational advisers to production teams". (1) The Union urges that more facilities and opportunities should be created to allow for the secondment of teachers to educational broadcasting. In some areas this is already being done where local education authorities have agreed to the secondment of teachers to BBC local radio stations.

In order to benefit from the educational value of television, schools should be well-equipped with television sets. The Committee finds through its survey that more secondary, junior and middle schools are equipped with television than with radio but that in infant and first schools the position is reversed. Unfortunately in a number of schools there is only a single television set and this is "frequently ill-tuned, ill-serviced, and ill-sited". Repairs and maintenance are vital and should be at an adequate level.

The Committee commends the use of video-recorders as they enable the teachers to record television programmes on magnetic tapes and re-show them at times and in circumstances best suited to the needs of the pupils and the school organisation. The Union agrees with the Committee that the needs of nursery and infant schools in particular for facilities for recording programmes and storing tapes should be given urgent consideration. The Union, however, would add that such equipment should not only be made available to schools but also to teachers' centres, resource centres and the like. The Union is gratified that the Committee recommends that the use of audio-visual equipment should be incorporated in the courses of initial professional education of teachers and in-service training.

The Union supports fully the Committee's call to revise the law of copyright so as to make available to teachers a far greater proportion of material than is at present possible. In its submission of evidence to the Whitford Committee on Copyright in January 1975, the Union expressed full support for the general case presented by the Council for Educational Technology and for the bulk of the recommendations which its evidence contained. However, the Union took a different view from the "fair dealing" view advocated by the Council and proposed instead, either a levy on equipment of the kind introduced in Germany, or the Swedish system, whereby the government pays an annual sum to an organisation representing authors and publishers.

The Committee pinpoints certain areas where there is an urgent need for expansion. These are in the pre-school years, in the early stages of schooling, and schooling for older children with learning difficulties. The Committee believes that this can be achieved only by assistance from public funds, possibly with some selective help from charitable foundations. The Union would also identify these areas as requiring immediate attention and welcomes the swift action taken by the School Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdom in including these priorities to some extent in their programme plans for 1975-76 and in their planning output for subsequent years. However, the Union hopes this first step will be followed by a further expansion in the provision of programmes for very young children and their parents and older children with learning difficulties.

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(1) NUT's evidence to the Annan Committee on the Future of Broadcasting, March 1975

The Union fully supports the Committee's assertion that "much remains to be done to encourage and enable schools to make widespread and constructive use of what is already provided". Television is a rapidly developing medium of communication and must be utilised to a much greater extent to benefit the education service.

Home Visiting and Parents' Role

The Union in its evidence to the Bullock Committee stressed the importance of parental involvement in a child's linguistic development and sought an increase in the provision of measures designed to help parents to a better understanding of their role. We are pleased therefore that the Committee has recognised that the child's early acquisition of language is greatly influenced by his home environment and has made positive recommendations to extend and modify existing arrangements.

Initially the Committee considered the child development courses available to some Secondary School pupils which included reference to children's language development. It concludes that those courses which were more broadly based were of greater interest than those where the emphasis was on the preparation for parenthood; all courses should have an element of practical experience and to this end the Committee recommends that the pupils should be encouraged to visit infant and nursery schools. This implies close co-operation between the teachers of the schools concerned and careful planning by those involved. In view of the added responsibility the nursery/infant teacher would assume, the Union would expect that staffing ratios would be generous in the schools used for this purpose and that the students were well-briefed on the role they were expected to play under the direction of the professional staff.

Possibly the most effective method of ensuring that mothers become aware of their importance in relation to their children's language needs, is to provide appropriate material at the ante-natal clinics. Whilst accepting that clinic personnel have many demands on their services, the Committee hopes that health and education authorities will co-operate to introduce programmes which will help parents to understand from the beginning that language development must take its place alongside the physical and emotional growth of their children. The Union endorses this recommendation which underlines the importance of close liaison between education and the social services particularly in the pre-school field and urges that adequate resources of man-power and materials are made available to implement it.

Health Visitors who give mothers advice about the physical care of young children are usually accepted by the majority of parents. In advocating that visits should be increased and extended so that parents are encouraged to further their children's educational development, the Committee acknowledges that there will be considerable resistance from the parents unless the visitors approach each situation with tact and tolerance.

The Union shares the Committee's caution and stresses the need for adequate training programmes to be available if the home visitors are to set up learning situations. The Report does not specify who should assume this role but we would hope that there would be full consultation with teachers and other interested organisations if this recommendation is to be implemented.

In its references to the success of the American home-school liaison visits and to the Red House project (1), the Committee highlights the benefits that could accrue from such arrangements. It should be emphasised however that qualified teachers participated in both schemes and that in the Red House project sufficient resources and staffing were available to enable a member of staff to act as a home-liaison teacher.

The Report recommends an increase in the number of home-school appointments particularly in culturally-deprived areas but emphasises that the teachers thus employed should be attached to one school and have a teaching commitment in addition to their other duties. It emphasises that pupil/teacher ratios should be favourable if the scheme is to be successful, an observation the Union wholeheartedly supports.

The Union has always recognised the importance of fostering close home-school co-operation but maintains that the means by which this should be achieved is a matter for individual schools to determine in the light of local needs and circumstances. The Report re-states the recommendations made by the Plowden Committee in 1967 and discusses whether parents might be involved in the work of the school on a voluntary basis. We accept that an increase in the number of adults available to a school will inevitably lead to increased opportunities for the children to participate in a one-to-one relationship or in small group discussions and hope that advisory teachers will be appointed to infants' and nursery schools to give 'special encouragement to initiatives to help parents play their part in the development of their children's language'. To achieve success in developing language skills, the parents will need to be more than good listeners and although the majority of hard-pressed primary teachers might welcome additional adult help in the classroom, a lack of professional expertise and attitudes might cause more problems than are solved. The Union maintains that the autonomy of the teacher is of paramount importance in terms of his or her teaching techniques; although the Bullock Committee supports this view unequivocally, it does not appear to share the Union's reservations regarding the involvement of parents in learning situations.

In its document, "The Provision of Pre-School Education in England and Wales (1973)", the Union expressed its reservations in the following extract:–

> "Teachers welcome parental support and are prepared to put their training and experience at the disposal of the parent. Nevertheless we see dangers in that it may be assumed that such community of interest confers an unqualified right upon parents to intervene in the educational function of the school as and when they see fit. Co-operation from schools will be fully offered, but the mode and timing of such co-operation must be conditioned by the educational policies and aims of the school. Teachers are responsible for the welfare of all children and have to hold a balance between the needs of the individual and the community, in a way parents do not normally have to bear in mind."

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(1) Social Science Research Council/Department of Education and Science Project: "Educational Priority" Vol I Publ. H.M.S.O. 1972

It is with this in mind that the Union welcomes the Committee's recognition of the importance of parent education and involvement whilst stressing the need to maintain the professional role of the teacher in education.

C: PROFESSIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Language Across the Curriculum

The Committee recommends that there should be "an organised policy for language across the curriculum in every school, establishing every teacher's involvement in language and reading development" and that such a policy would be greatly facilitated by the appointment of "a suitably qualified teacher with responsibility for advising and supporting his colleagues in language and the teaching of reading". The importance of continuity and cohesion in developing literacy programmes is emphasised throughout the Report and places much of the responsibility for implementation on the headteachers and the schools. Headteachers, the Committee states, are "uniquely placed to encourage a policy of language across the curriculum" whether in the primary or secondary field and they should ensure that a general school policy is understood and agreed by all staff. All teachers must accept responsibility for improving standards of reading and language. The primary school teacher is in a position to devise his/her own language policy in respect of the class he teaches, provided this is in keeping with the general strategy already agreed by the head and staff.

In the Secondary field however, many subject teachers have not been involved in developing the language needs of their pupils and the Committee recommends therefore that all secondary teachers "should be aware of the linguistic processes by which their pupils acquire information and understanding and the implications for the teacher's own use of language". 'The reading demands of their own subjects and the ways in which the pupils can be helped to meet them' is also an important consideration. The Head of the English Department should ensure that the development of reading and language skills at all levels is one of its most important responsibilities and devise a 'coherent strategy' which is *understood* and agreed by all staff – such a policy should take account of the following aspects:–

1) Language for learning;
2) The pupil's problems arising from the linguistic demands of specialist subjects;
3) The importance of "talk";
4) The place of expressive writing in relationship to the writing demands of specialist areas;
5) The possibilities of an agreed approach across all subjects;
6) The relationship between the English and Remedial departments.

The Union acknowledges that English departments and specialist teachers should play a significant role in all matters relating to reading and language development; in addition we recommend that there should also be a programme of in-service training and the Union urges authorities to make increased provision for this type of course.

School Organisation

(a) The Primary and Middle Years

Throughout the Report, the Committee places great emphasis on the school's recognition of the importance of language and literacy and the need for the school to devise its own policy to develop the language and reading skills of its pupils.

The Committee reviews the variety of pre-school experience of young children and recommends that contacts between the infant school, nursery, playgroup and home be developed. Parents and young children should be able to spend some time in school prior to formal admission and admissions should be staggered to enable the teachers to establish close relationships with parents and children. In its evidence to the Plowden Council, ten years ago, the Union stressed the importance of research which indicated that children from inadequate home environments were at a disadvantage linguistically, culturally and conceptually. In order to mitigate these disadvantages, the Union recommended that the nursery school programme should be expanded and that the entry to infant school should be at the beginning of the academic year in which the child attained his fifth birthday. The Bullock Report's emphasis on the importance of pre-school and early school language experience reinforces the Union's view that the existing and proposed reduction in nursery provision and the possible cutback in staffing are retrogressive and will only serve to exacerbate the existing situation.

The Committee examined the different forms of organisation within primary schools and their effects on the teaching of reading and language development. It regrets that labels have been applied to indicate the type of organisation the school follows e.g. progressive, traditional and integrated. These terms tend to simplify the complex situations which exist in the majority of schools and do not actually reflect the patterns of work within them. The Committee believes that a study should be made of the conditions in which children learn most efficiently, they do not agree however that any specific form of organisation will in itself guarantee results.

The Committee looked closely at the characteristics of vertically grouped and non-vertically grouped classes and used the results of the survey to illustrate how the teaching of reading is conducted within them. It is significant that there is little difference between the two groups in the time each allocates to the basic skills, hearing the children read and reading practice, although it would be incorrect to conclude from the evidence of the survey, the there was no difference of emphasis in the general approach to learning; what the Committee does suggest is that it is a mistake to relate one form of organisation to a particular approach to teaching. Whatever the organisation, the teacher must keep a record of the progress of each child and the more individual the approach, the greater the need for accurate, careful and regular notes.

The way in which a school is organised depends on a number of factors and these should be carefully considered before final decisions are made. If changes are proposed, consultation and planning involving all members of staff should precede the

introduction of new methods. It is not desirable for schools to adopt new systems because they are currently fashionable; nor should others maintain a rigid formal pattern because it was effective in the past. In both cases, teachers should be aware of educational development and be prepared to assess and critically examine its relevance to their own needs; the needs of the children the quality of their resources and the environment in and outside the school. The Committee concludes that there is no one form of organisation of schools or classes which will apply to all situations. Throughout the primary and middle years there should be a gradual development from a firmly based class-teacher relationship, through some form of co-operative working, to a degree of specialism for the 12 and 13 year olds. The Committee strongly recommends that the language policy should be an integral part of the curriculum and that every primary and middle school should appoint a member of staff to support his/her colleagues and correlate the language activities throughout the school. If the teacher thus appointed is to be effective, sufficient time and resources should be available to enable him/her to devise and introduce appropriate language programmes. School-based in-service courses would also be of particular benefit in those schools where numbers were decreasing and more accommodation became available. The Committee believes that the role of these teachers is vital to the success of a school's language policy and that special consideration should be given to the allocation of above scale posts for this purpose.

The Committee reviews some of the conflicting evidence on class size and standards. It believes that the N.F.E.R. observation that "the fact that the majority of teachers will reject the evidence relating to class size is perhaps a reflection on the wear and tear they experience in handling large classes day after day," was most useful in determining its approach to the problem. The Report emphasises the need for an improvement in the pupil-teacher ratio not necessarily to reduce the average class size but to deploy teachers in small group situations as effectively as possible. Additionally the Committee recommends that extra staff and resources should be made available to schools in socially disadvantaged areas. The Union warmly welcomes these recommendations and urges the Government to review its policy with regard to teacher employment.

Another important factor affecting the organisation is that of the design of the building. The Committee commends those teachers who, with great ingenuity, had developed a "modern" approach in old and restricted accommodation; it believes new buildings should be flexible in their design and offer a range of choices of organisation. The implications for organisation and curriculum in open-plan schools were examined by the Union two years ago and it was felt that in many cases scant attention had been given to this aspect. In order to implement the recommendations regarding adult and parental involvement in language development of the young, there should be spaces available where adults can converse in a one-to-one relationship.

In every primary and middle school, the headteacher plays a vital role in promoting successful language and literacy programmes in the school and the Committee

recommends that all heads should place a high priority on language and reading in the curriculum and organisation of the school and consult with their staff to devise a common policy.

(b) The Secondary Years

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the Report is the emphasis it places on the role the secondary schools should play in developing language skills and extending the reading experience of their pupils.

The Committee used the evidence of the survey to compare the advantages and disadvantages of integrated studies, which included an English element, with the practice of teaching English as a specialist subject. This was still more common than the former type of organisation in spite of a growing interest in integrated work. The Committee believes that the introduction of integrated studies should not necessarily preclude the pursuit of English as a specialism and could be considered to be complementary in the approach each makes to a specific aspect of the subject. Whatever organisation is adopted, it is important that the English department should be involved in the planning and operation of the work, be able to give guidance and support to colleagues and provide suitable resources.

The interest of the headteacher in the teaching of English is vital to the development of a constructive language and reading policy. Unless he or she actively supports the work of the English department and affords it proper recognition in relation to other subjects of the curriculum, the attitudes of staff will not be favourable to a cohesive, positive approach. The head of department must not only be responsible for the management of his/her members of staff but must also be aware of their resource and in-service needs. The policy devised by the department should include a programme of development designed to extend the reading skills of pupils at all levels and for this reason, the Committee recommends that one member of the team should hold advanced reading qualifications. The questions of pupil grouping and the availability of suitably qualified teachers were also considered. The movement towards mixed ability teaching was closely examined and the survey indicated that this practice in relation to English was fairly widespread. The Committee was not unanimous in its views of this approach but doubted the wisdom of setting or streaming pupils according to their ability in English. To be successful, mixed ability grouping requires careful planning to ensure that children with reading difficulties receive individual help. Books and other resources should be plentiful and suited to the needs of the pupils. The Committee recognises that this type of teaching demands good classroom control and skills in teaching and organising learning resources. It is concerned that a third of the teachers in the survey had no specific English qualification and that a further third spend less than half their teaching time involved in English work. The Committee deplores the attitudes of those who believe that teachers from other areas of the curriculum can 'fill in' and teach English with little or no preparation. This situation creates additional pressures for the department and the Committee suggests that more above scale posts should be made available to teachers of English

and that improved staffing in the department would allow more time for consultation, planning and in-service education.

The Union has consistently campaigned for increased ancillary help in both secondary and primary schools. We welcome, therefore, the Committee's recommendation that every English department should have ancillary and clerical help to prepare teaching materials and administer the department. It was also found that in many schools there was no specific allocation of accommodation to English. The Committee strongly recommends that every English teacher should have a teaching base and that the department should have a centre in which to house equipment and provide facilities for the members of staff and ancillary helpers in a similar way to the provision made for other subjects of the curriculum. The design of schools should recognise that educational methods and patterns of organisation are continuously evolving. A school building should provide spaces for large and small group work as well as opportunities for reading and writing in a quiet enclosed space.

The Union hopes that the many areas of concern expressed by the Bullock Committee in relation to the teaching of language and reading skills at secondary level will be carefully considered by those most involved in this sphere of education.

Continuity and Liaison between Schools

The Union has always supported and encouraged the fullest possible liaison and co-operation between teachers in primary and secondary schools as advocated in the Hadow Report of 1926 and again in the Plowden Report of 1967. The latter commented that although there had been some progress in this field, contact procedures were still inadequate. The Bullock Committee, whilst welcoming the evidence of a further improvement, was perturbed that the recognition of the importance of the principle was considered sufficient in many cases and had not developed except in very general terms. The Committee attaches the greatest importance to the need for unbroken continuity in the assessment of children's needs, particularly in respect of language and reading development and recommends ways in which heads and staff of schools might jointly plan the transition of children. It is extremely important to recognise that when children transfer from infant/first schools to junior/middle schools they have a particular need of security and reassurance and that this can best be achieved by exchanging teachers, the first year teacher of the receiving school thus becoming an accustomed figure. The Committee considers it essential for schools to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of each other's methods and approaches, thus avoiding sharp breaks in practice. It is particularly important too, that teachers in junior schools do not assume that every child transferred to them should be able to read; the Committee regrets that many teachers still regard reading as a process learnt while young and retained as a fixed skill. It maintains that it is unrealistic to insist that specific objectives are the sole responsibility of the infant school and that the junior school should be able to plan a programme based on these assumptions.

Co-operation between schools which encourages teacher exchanges, programmes of

meetings and discussion of children's work should lead to a mutual understanding of each school's objectives and a recognition of reading as a developmental process and ideally such schools should work together to produce a joint reading programme.

Records of children's work and objective data should also contain references to a child's strength and weaknesses in reading and language development. Precise information should be transmitted indicating not only the pupil's reading age or reading book, but also the exact nature of his reading difficulties. Examples of a child's writing and reading material should also be transferred. This would enable the receiving teacher to formulate a more accurate assessment of his performance, and the security of a familiar reading scheme would encourage the pupil with reading difficulties to respond more readily; the more able readers, identified from the records, would be provided with new material to stimulate their individual needs. The Committee, whilst acknowledging the value of written, detailed records, advocates that teachers should also discuss children individually; this would ensure that the receiving teacher had first hand knowledge of the children and of the learning and home situations in which they had been involved. Opportunities for constructive language development, parental interest and length of stay in the infants school are among the many important factors which influence the early stages of learning – factors which must be made known to the new teacher. The Committee also recommends that where feasible there should be a continuity of a policy which involves parents in extending children's language opportunities. The role and involvement of parents in schools is discussed elsewhere, but the Union maintains that each school should make its own decision regarding parental involvement and co-operation and we would not accept therefore that the policy of an infants/first school should influence the junior school in this respect.

Similar liaison procedures should be followed between primary and secondary schools and a member of the secondary school staff should be appointed to maintain contact with the contributory schools and arrange programmes of visits and teaching assignments between members of the staffs. Great emphasis should be given to bridging the gap which separates not only the children, but all too often the teachers as well. Joint conferences at which the aims and organisation of primary schools are made familiar to secondary staff would help to eliminate the view that all primary schools are creative, discovery-based, child-centred anarchies and all secondary schools rigid, information-processing institutions. In this way a more constructive and sympathetic understanding of each others' activities should result in a more realistic expectation of a child's linguistic achievement. Records and first hand knowledge of the pupil's background are equally important and the continuing need for reading and language development can only be met if the information supplied contains details of the child's language experience, the extent and range of his reading and the nature of any reading difficulties that may have persisted. "Cross-age tutoring" is instanced as another means of drawing pupils and teachers together across the various stages of schooling – this would involve older pupils in story-telling, story-writing and talking sessions with younger children.

The Committee considers effective liaison between schools to be a priority need

and regrets that there are still many schools which have little or no contact with the one that precedes or follows them. Reading must be regarded as a continuously developing skill and language should be extended as the child grows older. Without close co-operation and mutual confidence this will not be achieved.

Initial Training

The Union is committed to the establishment of an all graduate profession and the acceptance of the Government that by the early 1980's the teacher's certificate should be phased out. The Union welcomed the Government's inclusion of this objective in the White Paper "Education: A Framework for Expansion" (December 1972) but views with concern the halting manner in which this policy is to be implemented by the end of the decade. Moreover the introduction of the Diploma in Higher Education in tandem with the reorganisation of the colleges has led to a wide variety of course and institutional structures which could result in the weakening of initial teacher education and training unless several safeguards are provided.

The Union is particularly concerned that with the emphasis moving away from concurrent three-year and four-year initial training to "2 + 1", "2 + 1 + 1" and three-year ordinary degree followed by the PGCE, that there will be a truncation in the core subjects (such as language, mathematics, science, art, craft and environmental studies) which form the essential basis of professional education for intending first and middle school teachers. It should be recognised that by the early 1980's only a minority of teachers entering the profession will have received a three or four year concurrent professional education and for the remainder the balance of their initial professional education will have depended on heterogeneous course structures with a wide range of academic and professional options.

It is against the background of such developments that the Union in general welcomes the priority afforded to language (and reading in particular) as part of the initial training course. The Union shares the view that few colleges currently provide intending teachers with a sound theoretical and practical base throughout the three or four years of their initial professional education. It is therefore of considerable importance that the universities, the polytechnics, the colleges of higher education and the colleges of education which will offer three or four year courses Dip. HE's and PGCE's give serious consideration to the quality and the length of professional preparation in language and in particular to reading. (1)

Accordingly, while the Union recognises that there will need to be a wide variation in the organisation of educational theory and practice, it is nevertheless important that there is a common core in all courses which lead to the award of qualified teacher status. The Bullock Report suggests that there should be a minimum of 100 hours tuition in language development and related issues in a basic three-year/four-year course and that 150 hours would be preferable. In general it is to be hoped that this quantification will be welcomed as a useful guideline to course designers and to validating bodies and professional committees for teacher edu-

(1) Paragraphs 23.25 – 23.26, Pages 343 – 346 (q.v. Appendix 5)

cation. It is a matter for concern, however, that such standards are not mandatory for students following Dip. H.E. and PGCE courses and the Union believes that, if the time available for the professional preparation in language and reading is inadequate, that such courses should be lengthened; with specialist four-term PGCE options and specialist Dip. H.E. options being established to meet this need. The Union welcomes the range they intend to teach, should be required to pursue a course in language in education and that no matter what the modular or unit structure, it should not be possible to qualify to be a teacher without having successfully completed an integrated theory and practice course which included language development, reading and related matters.

In considering the reorganisation of the institutional pattern of teacher education, the Union regrets that the Bullock Committee did not see fit to recommend that in several parts of the country individual colleges should be designated as specialist institutions in language in education and be provided with sufficient resources and specialist staff to become centres of excellence in this vital area of professional education. The Union considers that a major part of educational research and higher degree work in language should be undertaken in these specialist institutions. These institutions would also play a leading role in providing advanced in-service education for the profession and would co-ordinate with other colleges and institutions in their respective regions in order to provide a comprehensive and varied programmes of in-service education in language for the widely differing needs of the profession.

In-Service Education

It is now generally agreed that pre-service and in-service training should be part of the same continuous process. To assume that pre-service training finally equips the new entrant for the profession is to expect too much. The Union has for some time expressed its concern about the unsatisfactory nature of the 'probationary' year as it is organised at present, and in several policy statements Teacher Education (1971); James, A Critical Appraisal (1972); and The Probationary Year (1971), it has suggested the need for an 'induction' year.

Part of the process of induction (as suggested by the Bullock Committee) should be:–

1) support for the newly qualified teacher in the classroom, and

2) the opportunity to continue training,

The Union supports in principle the need for the agencies to implement these schemes, i.e. teacher tutors and professional centres, but considers that there are several issues which need to be considered both at national and at local level if the pilot schemes which have been set up are to be meaningful in establishing new procedures throughout the country. (1)

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(1) The Induction of New Teachers (NUT November 1973) page 4

The Bullock Committee recommends that primary and secondary school teachers should be able to meet during their induction year so that each group may acquire from the other an impression of the overall language development of their pupils. This is very much in line with the recommendations of the Union in "The Reform of Teacher Education" (1971) that teachers should be conversant with the needs of more than one age range and that it is necessary to extend the experience of the teacher beyond the limits of the school within which he teaches.

The Report suggests the 'growing evidence of disenchantment' amongst teachers with the methods used in in-service training. It recommends that the teacher should be a full partner in this process and that the individual school has an important part to play in in-service education. A staff that has played a part in deciding its own in-service education needs will be likely to receive and evaluate collectively the ideas that are brought back, not reject them unexamined. Since the Union advocates staff participation in the curriculum and organisation of the school, it follows that it supports too the involvement of staff in deciding on its need for further training, either school-based or outside the school.

The Union considers it undesirable for teacher tutors to be based on the education office of the authority, a professional centre or a training institution, and it recommends that every effort should be made to ensure that teacher tutors should be permanent members of the staff of schools whose probationers they have been appointed to assist.

The Committee urges generous use of supply teachers to allow heads and teachers to attend in-service activities outside the school and to exchange visits with other schools.

The Committee recommends greater provision of reading courses and of courses on other aspects of English – primarily the role of language in the classroom and the use of diagnosis in the teaching of reading. It would also like to see more courses dealing with the teaching of advanced skills to help secondary school teachers.

A variety of provision is suggested by the Bullock Committee and considerable emphasis is placed on a flexible interaction between practice and theory, to include 1 – 4 week workshops leading to a term's follow-up work in school; courses involving half-day release, with afternoon and evening sessions, for teachers involved on such follow-up work; school based investigations and case studies over a term; courses and workshops for a weekend or a full week, both to initiate such school-based investigations and to draw together conclusions.

The cost of providing such courses and of supplying teachers to fill the "gaps" made by such courses, has been discussed elsewhere.

The Committee fully approves the development of planning on a regional basis of in-service training. It particularly commends the regional courses arranged jointly by the A.T.Os and the D.E.S.

Full-time courses at colleges or university institutes are poorly attended since teachers have found it difficult to secure secondment for one-term or one year.

The Committee's findings on this matter are fully in accord with the information gathered by the Union on numbers of teachers taking up full-time courses. The Committee underlines the need for provision of higher degree and diploma courses in order to fill the ranks of teachers who may become teacher tutors and provide the advisory help upon which induction and in-service training depend.

The Committee welcomes the growing co-operation between reading centres which have been established in several colleges of education and teachers' centres. It believes that language/reading centres should be developed so that teachers in every authority have access to the facilities they offer. This can be achieved either by creating specialist units within teachers' centres or by establishing independent units. There should be, it suggests, joint participation by full-time professional staff, the L.E.A. English advisory team and lecturers from the college of education.

The Union welcomes these suggestions as it does the suggestion to establish a national centre for the teaching of language at all levels, but financial considerations will reserve these ideas for the future.

D: FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

In its reaction to the Bullock Report, the Union expressed disappointment regarding the remarks made by Mr. Prentice, the former Secretary of State for Education, immediately on the publication of the report. Mr. Prentice stated that those recommendations with financial implications "must be subject to current constraints", and action on those which would involve additional resources "must be postponed". While accepting that certain recommendations can be carried out without considerable expenditure, the Union feels that a great deal of what the report says must require substantial further resources and that these resources must be made available if the report is to be implemented.

THE UNION ESTIMATES THAT AT LEAST 55 RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD, IN THEMSELVES, COST SEPARATELY AT LEAST £1 MILLION TO IMPLEMENT. FURTHER, SOME 65 RECOMMENDATIONS APPROACH THIS FIGURE IN TERMS OF FINANCIAL COMMITMENT. The remaining ones, either low or no cost recommendations, can often only be effected if other more expensive recommendations are taken up. For example, recommendation 98 which calls upon teachers to devise various ways of extending their pupil's interest in fiction and of increasing the amount and range of their voluntary private reading, when taken in isolation might be assumed to be a low/no cost recommendation. Yet such a change of approach on the part of the teachers will result in the children seeking out fiction and other books and then discovering, as the Committee did, that "many secondary schools have a disturbingly small number of library books per pupil". In fact, the report estimates that just 30% of the schools sampled have 11 books or more per pupil. This means that some 70% have fewer than the minima recommended by the Library Association (10 books per pupil and 15 for every sixth form pupil). About 44% of schools have fewer than eight books per pupil. The children will also discover no proper facilities for private reading. The Committee's survey shows that while 47% of the secondary schools use their library only as a library, "a disturbing 19% were timetabling it for other purposes for more than half the week". So recommendation 98 can only be fully effective if recommendations 282 and 276, both high cost ones, are implemented as well.

OF THE 17 PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS, 11 HAVE HIGH COST ELEMENTS IN THEM. For example, principal recommendation 14, which urges that a standing working party should be formed, made up of representatives of the D.E.S. and L.E.As, to consider capitation allowances and the resources of schools, is, taken on its own, a moderate cost but, in the light of the Committee's findings, the working party is more than likely to recommend higher allowances for schools along the lines suggested by recommendations 282, 283, and 285 – all three high cost ones. The Union supports the setting up of this standing working party with adequate teacher representation and agrees with the views expressed by the Committee that capitation allowances should keep pace with inflation and that book provision in schools is unsatisfactory.

Capitation Allowances and Book Provision

Some authorities make inadequate provision for books, notably those that provide neither a supportive service nor exceed minimal expenditure on school library resources. In several of the submissions of evidence the Committee was urged to recommend that all authorities should make provision for books up to a certain standard and that there should be an increase in the general capitation allowances. The Committee notes that the cost of text and library books falls within a larger block of local authority expenditure known as "non-teaching costs". As a result, it observes that in 1972/3 only 5.36% of the total of primary and secondary non-teaching costs was spent on books. It concludes: "We believe that books are in a particularly vulnerable position in relation to the other items (e.g. increased ancillary staff, maintenance and repair bills) covered by non-teaching expenditure." The Committee also observes that expenditure on books accounts for only a very small proportion of the total net L.E.A. expenditure, a mere 0.85% in 1971/72.

The Bullock Report notes further that the simple per capita basis for calculating allowances to schools is "too crude" and considers that the system of calculating allowances to schools works to the serious disadvantage of small schools whose needs are not in a linear relationship with the number of pupils. A better formula is advocated whereby two basic figures are used: a per capita figure sufficient for mainly consumable materials; and a second figure for those items which it is not sensible to reckon on this basis such as library books. Alternatively, every school could be given the same lump sum, with an additional amount determined on the per capita basis. The Committee gives the following example of a formula applied by one LEA for providing an additional allowance for small schools (1973 figures):

	Number of Pupils	Lump sum in addition to per capita allowance
		£
Primary	Under 20	40
	21 – 40	30
	41 –100	20
Secondary	Under 300	200
	301 – 500	100

Also acknowledged are the difficulties authorities face particularly in the present economic climate, but the Committee is nevertheless dismayed that books and associated materials are in the forefront when cuts are made. It observes that after each percentage cut the new lower figure becomes the baseline for the next calculation. The Committee therefore suggests that until the proposed working party is able to produce new recommended figures for book provision in primary and secondary schools, the Association of Education Committees' most recent recommended levels should be regarded as a minimum and that all authorities should meet them.

The report also notes: "The resources available to schools are sometimes distributed in a very uneven manner, and those with meagre funds are not necessarily compensated in other ways. Some schools have access to bulk buying which tends to increase the effectiveness of their purchasing power, while others receive special allocations of money from time to time. Energetic and influential LEA advisory staff can have a considerable effect upon a school's resources in their own subject fields".

The Committee has no doubt that certain technological aids have a considerable contribution to make to language development. Judging from its survey there would be a need to increase teaching aids if recommendations 291, 292, 293 and 297 (all high cost) are to be implemented. The percentage of secondary schools in the survey NOT having the following technological aids for English is as follows:–

1. Mains tape recorder 2.0
2. Battery portable tape recorder (This is strongly recommended by the Committee because of its 'versatility') 42.6
3. Record player 1.8
4. Film projector 7.9
5. Strip/slide/loop projector 13.5
6. Television set 8.7
7. Video tape recorder 82.1
8. Radio 17.1
9. Reprographic facilities 24.5
10. Teaching machines (including Language Master and Synchrofax) 86.2

The percentage of other schools in the survey not having the following technological aids for English is as follows:–

	Infant and First	Junior with Infant: First and Middle	Junior and Middle
Recorder player	26.2	26.0	15.2
Mains tape recorder	33.3	18.1	8.8
Battery tape recorder	58.7	63.1	43.1
Filmstrip/Slide/Loop Projector	50.0	42.3	34.8
Film projector	87.?	77.7	61.3
Radio	15.5	11.9	8.3
Television	36.1	12.1	4.?
Language Master	89.3	90.6	83.3
Synchrofax	98.0	98.3	96.1
Other teaching machines	92.5	91.0	91.7

Staffing

The Union has persistently campaigned for an improvement in the pupil/teacher ratio and we are pleased that the Committee has drawn attention to this need. The Report requests that English should be recognised as requiring substantial specialist knowledge, and the allocation of teaching assignments should reflect this fact. The Report reveals that 32.8% or about one-third of teachers teaching English in secondary schools have "no discernible qualification for the role." The Committee sees a shortage of qualified teachers as an important reason for this state of affairs. The Committee also wishes to see properly qualified teachers of drama, a subject it feels has a valuable contribution to make to the development of children's language. It finds that many English Departments, even in the large comprehensive schools, are without a member of staff qualified to make drama a part of English. Of a sample of 939 teachers working with 12 year olds, only 21 regard themselves as trained drama specialists. Of the 1052 working with 14 year olds, 26 are qualified.

Recommendations 150-153 deal specifically with staffing ratios and provision for additional staff. The Committee believes that "there are still far too many classes which are larger than they should be". The Committee is convinced that if the teacher cannot spend time with the individual child in primary school, the kind of suggestions outlined in its chapter, Reading in the Early Years, cannot be effected. The Report states that there should be an improvement in the pupil/teacher ratio.

The Committee's repeated pleas for additional staff to improve the teacher/pupil ratio are reiterated in the principal recommendations 2, 5 and 7. The Union cannot see how these recommendations could be implemented by a redeployment of staff, believing that this can only be achieved by recruiting more teachers. For instance, principal recommendation 2, calls upon authorities to introduce home visiting schemes to help parents of pre-school children play an active part in the children's language growth. If teachers are seconded from schools for this work, replacements will have to be found for them and the same logic also applies if educational visitors or home liaison teachers are appointed or if a teacher on the staff is made responsible for supporting his colleagues in language development and the teaching of reading. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ESCAPE THE HIGH COST OF IMPROVED STAFFING IN SCHOOLS.

Building Design and Teacher Consultation

The Union believes that an increase in ancillary help and teaching materials is desirable and agrees with the Committee that better space provision to house the ancillary help, teaching materials and the English Department is required. The Committee points to the fact that facilities are not always readily available in nursery and infant schools for an adult to withdraw with an individual child or small group to engage in uninterrupted talk and in language games. It believes that school design should take account of the need for several such spaces to be distributed throughout the school. The Committee is concerned about the general lack

of regular classes for English teachers in the schools: its survey shows that 63.1% of teachers have a fixed room for teaching English; 27.3% move to rooms which are class bases; and 9.6% have no regular base.

The Report strongly recommends that when new buildings or extensions are being designed there should be full consultation between architects, the authority's English advisory staff, and teachers, adding: "Some of the best design currently to be found has resulted from this kind of professional co-operation."

Initial and In-Service Training

In its evidence to the Bullock Committee, the Union recommended that increased initial and in-service training opportunities should be provided in the teaching of reading. The Committee has echoed this call and recommends that (a) "a substantial course on language in education (including reading) should be part of every primary and secondary teacher's initial training, whatever the teacher's subject or the age of the children with whom he or she will be working", and that (b) "there should be an expansion in in-service education opportunities in reading and the various other aspects of the teaching of English, and these should include courses at diploma and higher degree level. Teachers in every LEA should have access to a language/reading centre." The Committee's survey estimates that one in ten (10%) of class teachers attend the shortest courses in connection with English in one year. Teachers find difficulty attending the courses, either because they cannot secure secondment or because they cannot secure places. So the Committee calls upon the authorities to second more teachers to courses and to increase the number of courses. This would mean that the number of teachers in the schools would have to increase in order to allow teachers to be released. The Committee's survey shows that the larger the number of teachers in a school, the higher the probability of a teacher attending a Teachers' Centre. Money too will have to be spent to provide such courses.

Conclusion

The Union believes the Committee's findings provide a good estimate of future requirements for the improvement of literacy skills in schools in this country, and that the hard core of the recommendations, which mainly stem from these findings, can only be satisfactorily implemented by each part of the education service playing its full part, by wider consultation and considerable expenditure of money.

E: APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Post Bullock

Last November the Union sought information from the membership regarding the implementation of certain aspects of 'Language for Life'. It is heartening to note that many authorities have reacted positively to the Report in some degree, although it is also obvious that those recommendations which involve an increase in expenditure have only been implemented to a very limited extent or not at all. The following is a synopsis of the replies received to Circular E.58.

1. In-Service Education

Many authorities have organised courses with a language/reading bias for secondary and primary teachers and in some areas one-day conferences and working party meetings have been held to examine the implications of the Report. Most courses seem to have been within the authorities' existing programmes of in-service education – there is little evidence of increased provision overall.

2. Remedial Centres/Reading Clinics

Some areas had already established centres prior to the publication of the Report and have widened the scope of their activities; others use either teachers' centres or colleges as bases; one authority uses mobile clinics, whilst others have established teams of peripatetic remedial teachers based on selected schools. It would appear that some authorities are appointing more remedial staff and are aware of the need for diagnostic facilities to be easily available. It is not clear from the information received how effective the clinics/centres are in terms of the size of the school population served nor what follow-up measures have been introduced and these developments warrant close monitoring.

3. Home-visiting Schemes

Little progress seems to have been made since the Report was published. Several authorities had already established home-visiting programmes and most of these indicated that they hoped to expand their provision; elsewhere financial limitations have apparently inhibited developments in this area. The following are typical of the replies on this particular topic:-

> "These (home-visiting activities) are continually being reviewed though the possibility of expansion is limited by finance."
>
> "We have done nothing in this field and will be unable to do anything without a substantial improvement in staffing resources."

It is significant that several home-visiting programmes have been introduced in areas of social deprivation and that Urban Aid funds have been made available to enable the schemes to be implemented.

4. Advisory Teams

Most authorities seem to have co-ordinated the activities of their advisory teams by appointing a specialist adviser or by extending the remits of their existing English Advisers. In some areas additional advisory teachers have been appointed to support the work of the subject and general advisers in the field of language development.

5. Adult Literacy

This is the one area of activity which has been extended by all authorities, although it is doubtful whether the Bullock Report can claim the credit for this expansion. Certainly the Committee was concerned that adult literacy schemes should be introduced but the national campaign, supported by the BBC's three year programme, a Government grant and the establishment of the Adult Literacy Resources Agency, has received wide publicity and the achievements gained have been in response to this campaign rather than the recommendations of the Report.

6. Supplies of books and teaching aids

Very few authorities indicated that additional resources were to be made available. Some considered that existing provision was reasonable; others were examining the role of the library services and possible redeployment of these resources. In most cases financial stringency was used as an explanation for the lack of progress in this field and underlines yet again the urgent need to establish a national working party to examine all aspects of school revenue. (Principal Recommendation 14)

7. English teaching bases in Secondary Schools and increased ancillary help

In some areas new school buildings reflect the Report's recommendations regarding storage spaces and English bases; very few authorities have provided extra ancillary assistance and in some cases schools have been advised that if ancillary help is made available in English departments it must be made from the existing provision.

8. Transfer of Records

Many authorities are currently examining their form of record cards and monitoring the effectiveness of their transfer arrangements. In some areas comprehensive systems already existed – in others new measures are to be introduced in 1977.

9. Other initiatives

Many authorities indicated that further implementation of the Report was limited and that progress would be subject to the necessary resources being made available. In several areas, working parties had been established to examine the implications of a 'language across the curriculum' policy and in others, reading surveys and screening techniques were the subject of discussion. It is clear that without financial support, even the most enlightened authorities will have difficulty in maintaining the present provision and there will be little opportunity to expand further.

Appendix 2

Some Relevant Facts

Total number of Primary Schools (1974)	22,712
Total number of Middle Schools (1974)	909
Total number of Secondary Schools (1974)	4,675
Total number of schools (1974)	28,296

Staffing

Recommendation 148, page 530, reads:– "Every school should have a teacher on the staff responsible for supporting his colleagues in language development and the teaching of reading. In the allocation of above-scale posts English should be given a high priority". On average, the salary of this teacher-adviser would be about £4,500 per annum.

Building and Accommodation

Recommendation 53, page 520, reads:– "The design of nursery and infant schools should take account of the need for spaces to which adults can withdraw for work with individual children and small groups".

Recommendation 187, page 535, reads:– "English should have a departmental centre to house teaching material and ancillary help, and every English teaching room should have ample storage space".

Recommendation 279, page 546, reads:– "Resource centres in schools are an important development with potentially a considerable contribution to make to the teaching of English. When new buildings are being planned or existing buildings expanded the need for a resource centre should be anticipated".

It is estimated that the building cost for one primary place is £600+ and for a secondary place £1000+.

Ancillary help

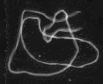
Recommendation 182, page 535, reads:– "English departments should receive ancillary help in: (i) the preparation of teaching materials, which might be centrally provided through a school resource centre; (ii) the handling of departmental material, for which 'internal' clerical assistance should be provided on the basis of 20 hours a week for every five forms of entry in an 11-18 school, and pro rata. Where this help mentioned in (i) is not available the department's own ancillary help should be increased".

An ancillary helper receives between £811 and £976. To provide at least one ancillary helper in each of the 4,675 secondary schools the total cost would be (taking the lowest rate of £811) a minimum of £3,791,425 based on 5 hours a day for 200 days.

Appendix 3

Unqualified Persons and the Teaching of Reading

For many years the Union has maintained its opposition to schemes which seek to involve unqualified persons in the teaching of reading. It therefore welcomes the references in the Bullock Report to the need for highly-skilled, experienced teachers to be responsible for the acquisition of reading skills.



Regrettably there have been many attempts to use the Report to justify such involvement. It must be stressed therefore that the Committee's recommendations relate to the involvement of ancillaries and parents in the development of *language* skills in the early years only and not to reading. A more detailed appraisal of these recommendations is to be found in the section on 'Home Visiting and Parents' Role' page:–

VIth Formers: The Union is also concerned that some schools have proposed schemes which involve the use of VIth formers as substitute "teachers" of younger remedial pupils; recommendation 219(iii) makes it quite clear that the Bullock Committee would deplore such proposals. It states:– "Remedial work is not for the inexperienced or indifferent teacher, but for the teacher who combines a high level of teaching skill with an understanding of the children's emotional and developmental needs".

It is accepted however, that in a different context, senior pupils could make a significant contribution to the development of the language of the younger children in the school, as well as extending their own writing skills, by involving them in story-telling, story-writing and talking sessions (Pages 54, 56, 218, 219 Bullock Report).

Parents: It has been stated elsewhere that a school's policy regarding parental co-operation should be decided by the headteacher and staff, in the light of the needs and circumstances of the school and its community. The Union's policy is clearly stated in the following extract:–

> "Teachers welcome parental support and are prepared to put their training and experience at the disposal of the parent. Nevertheless we see dangers in that it may be assumed that such community of interest confers an unqualified right upon parents to intervene in the educational function of the school as and when they see fit. Co-operation from schools will be fully offered, but the mode and timing of such co-operation must be conditioned by the educational policies and aims of the schools. Teachers are responsible for the welfare of all children and have to hold a balance between the needs of the individual and the community, in a way parents do not normally have to bear in mind."
> (The Provision of Pre-School Education in England and Wales 1973. N.U.T.)

Ancillaries: It should be emphasised that the Committee does *not* advocate that ancillaries should be trained as teachers of reading but recommends that teachers in infant and first schools should be supported by trained ancillaries. Part of this

training should involve a course in language development in the early years, as should the N.N.E.B. courses for nursery nurses.

Appendix 4

Resources

In the last issue of Dialogue, the Schools Council listed the following project materials which specifically related to the Bullock Report:–

(1) **Communication Skills in Early Childhood Project (3–6 years)**
Listening to Children Talking: A Guide to the Appraisal of Children's Use of Language and a set of six videotapes. Ward Lock and Drake Educational, spring 1976. A Second teachers' guide and set of videotapes are in preparation. (See this issue and Dialogue 14 summer 1973 for accounts of the project's work.)

(2) **Pre-School Education**
Pre-School Education, a Schools Council Research Study by Marianne Parry and Hilda Archer. Macmillan Education 1974.

(3) **Language Evaluation Profiles**
Swansea Evaluation Profile (See next item).

(4) **Compensatory Education Project (4–8 years)**
Swansea Evaluation Profile to be published in three volumes by Blackwell and Mott. First Volume early 1976. Swansea Test of Phonic Skills by Phillip Williams, Peter Congden, Margaret Holder and Norman Simms, Blackwell and Mott 1971.

Aspects of Early Reading Growth by Pat Davies and Phillip Williams, Blackwell and Mott 1975.

(5) **Breakthrough to Literacy (5–7 years)**
A language scheme for infants, providing a teachers' manual, sentence makers, word makers, readers and nursery rhyme records. Longman 1970.

Breakthrough in Action, a research report by Jessie Reid. Longman 1974.

(6) **Initial Teaching Alphabet (5–8 years)**
i.t.a.: What Is the Evidence? a booklet for teachers and parents by Vera Southgate. John Murray/W. & R. Chambers 1970.

(7) **Language Development in the Primary School (5–11 years)**
The Language for Primary School Children, a report by Connie and Harold Rosen. Penguin Education 1973.

(8) **Children's Reading Habits (10–16 years)**
Schools Council Working Paper 52 Children's Reading Interests, Evans/ Methuen Educational 1974.

(9) **Oracy (11–18 years)**
Learning Through Listening (listening comprehension tests for 10+, 13+ and 17+), tapes, teachers' manual, pupils' answer booklets. Macmillan Education 1976.

The Quality of Listening, a Schools Council Research Study by Andrew Wilkinson, Leslie Stratta, Peter Dudley, Macmillan Education 1974.

(10) **Writing Across the Curriculum 11–16**
Five teachers' booklets: From Information to Understanding; Why Write?; From Talking to Writing; Keeping Options Open: Writing in the Humanities; and Writing in Science in Schools and a book, Writing and learning Across the Curriculum, an appraisal of the project as a means of in-service training. Ward Lock Educational 1976.

(11) **Written Language of 11-18 year olds**
The Development of Writing Abilities (11–18), a Schools Council Research Study by James Britton, Tony Burges, Nancy Martin, Alex McLeod, Harold Rosen. Macmillan Education 1975.

(12) **Integrated Studies Project (11–16 years)**
Unit 2: Communicating With Others. Oxford University Press 1972-74.

(13) **Language in Use (11–18+ years)**
Language in Use a looseleaf binder providing 110 units, Edward Arnold 1971. Language in Use Tape is also available. Exploring Language Edward Arnold 1972. Language, 'English' and the Curriculum and Using Language in Use, Edward Arnold 1974.

(14) **Information Leaflets and Project Profiles**
Individual profiles of projects mentioned above as well as two information leaflets, Schools Council: Curriculum Research and Development in English and Schools Council: Curriculum and Research and Development in the Teaching of Reading are available free from Information Section, Schools Council, 160 Great Portland Street, London W1N 6LL.

In addition, many publishers have developed or are developing language and reading schemes which reflect the Committee's recommendations. E. J. Arnold for example have recently issued a detailed catalogue of books and resources which are designed to support teachers responsible for language development and it is expected that other companies will follow suit. Further information relating to specific resources may be obtained direct from the firms concerned, the public libraries or from the Education Department, National Union of Teachers, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BD.

Appendix 5

23.25 Two Examples of a Basic Language Course

Example 1

(1) The Nature and Function of Language
(based on (a) the students' own language and (b) the language of school children).
Language as rule-governed behaviour: reference to phonology, grammar, lexis.
Accents, dialect, standards.
Spoken and written media.
The functions of language – some theoretical models.

(2) Language Acquisition
Pre-speech behaviour in the family.
'Speech for oneself' and the regulative role of language.
Speech and the development of higher mental processes (Piaget, Vygotsky).
Creativity and language (Chomsky).
The development of syntax; transitional grammars.

(3) Speaking and Writing as Social Processes
The context of situation.
Language and role relations.
Language and social control.
Language and the presentation of self.
Conversation and the validation of social reality.

(4) The Processing of Coded Information
Stages in data-processing (a) perceptual, (b) encoded in speech, (c) encoded in writing.
'Ear language' and 'Eye language'.
'Linguistic awareness' and reading.
Storage and retrieval of information.

(5) Learning to Read
The initial stages: sight vocabulary, phonics, reading for meaning, context cues, the role of expectations.
Reading and the internalisation of written language forms.
Reading and the purposes of the curriculum.
Developmental reading: suiting the skill to the purpose.
Diagnosis, testing, observational techniques.
The role of fiction in developing reading.
Children's literature and patterns of individual reading.

(6) Language School

The language behaviour of the teacher (the language of instruction, of questioning, of control; the teacher as listener).
The language of text books.
The heuristic function of language – talking and writing as ways of learning.
The development of expressive, transactional, and poetic writing.
Literature as language.
Language across the curriculum – a language policy for a school.
Organisation: class organisation for talk, for writing, for reading.
organisation of resources.
diagnosis and recording.
Evaluation: educational aims and the uses of language in school.

23.26 *Example 2*

(1) Introduction

(a) An historical introduction to language change and stability.
(b) A sketch of linguistic theory, with psychological and sociological links.

(2) Communication in the context of cognitive and affective development

(a) Goals of communication in speech and writing: Information needs, negotiation processes; control processes; thinking; forms of self-expression.
(b) Sociological and psychological factors affecting communication
(i) accents and dialects; styles of print and writing; conventions of presentation; linguistic constraints in a multi-cultural society; attitudes and preconceptions; knowledge structures; motivations.
(ii) social context and style; comparative study of a range of texts; the kinds of writing required of children at school; the kinds of writing relevant to a teacher's professional role.

(3) The Communicative Event

(i) Strategies and tactics used in accomplishing communication goals.
(ii) Receptive organisation – information access and selection procedures.

(4) Skills and Structures

(a) Primary skills – Language substance.
(i) the sound system of English, with an emphasis on intonation, auditory perception and discrimination.
(ii) the graphic system of English, including punctuation, visual perception of letter shapes and groupings.
(iii) correspondences and anomalies in the sound and graphic systems. Auditory and visual association.

(b) Intermediate skills – Language form.

(i) Syntactic structures in speech and writing.

(ii) semantic structure: words and collocations semantic relationships.

(iii) inter-sentential structures in speech and writing; the paragraph and beyond.

(iv) redundancy as a feature of natural language: context cues in reading and listening, writing and speaking, arising from redundancy; stochastic processes.

(c) Comprehension skills – Language function.

(i) kinds of comprehension – literal, interpretative, reorganisation, inferential, evaluative, appreciative, applicative.

(ii) factors affecting comprehension.

(a) reader/listener preconceptions; reader/listener goals.

(b) behaviour of speaker/writer: language variation (e.g. restricted codes); sensitivity to situations (e.g. registers, language for special purposes); awareness of audience – aiming at target groups of listeners/readers.

(iii) Aids to comprehension: questions; note-taking techniques, models and diagrams.

(5) Self-development, Skills and Strategies

(a) Developmental analysis and evaluation.

(b) Learning to use verbal skills in communication. self-evaluation, recording techniques and personal resource management.

(c) Interdependence of resources and skills: the limiting effect of deficiencies in either: techniques for overcoming transitory and developmental deficiencies.

(6) Organisation of Language and Reading in the Curriculum

(a) Varieties of media for learning.

A Reading: reading schemes and workshops
subject-area textbooks and materials
other types of printed media

B Speech: the language of the teacher
verbal styles and strategies
recorded and broadcast speech
other varieties of spoken language
language interaction in group learning situations.

(b) Evaluation of media for learning.
   A intelligibility, legibility, readability of media.
   B analysis of content: logical and ideological.

c) Language across the curriculum.
   (i) activities for developing the full range of language/reading behaviour in each curriculum area.
   (ii) organisation of learning situations within the normal curriculum.

(7) Teaching the Individual Child

(i) Assessment of individual language and reading performance; record keeping.
Creative analysis of the child's idiolect, using the skills acquired earlier in the course.

(ii) Devising of individual learning activities based on the assessment of analysis.
Assessment and selection of appropriate materials to match individual needs.

(iii) Special individual problems in language and reading; an awareness of the various influencing factors.

(8) Development of the Language curriculum

(a) Evaluation of teaching materials and procedures in use.

(b) Resource development.
   (i) storage and retrieval systems for the teacher.

   (ii) management of audio-visual resources.